1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

which follow a request for assistance. The meat of large game animals is always readily distributed, even when a family is living with unrelated people. Other spontaneous gifts are made relatively rarely and then only in well defined cultural contexts. The most common of these presents include purchased trade goods; manufactures, such as moccasins; meat, berries, and brew. A few people exchange purchased trade goods at Christmas. Native manufactures may be given by a woman to her husband or brother. Spontaneous gifts, excepting meat, are frequently reciprocated within a few days or weeks and such reciprocity is usually expected, although not clearly formalized. Hospitality may be recognized as a special form of free gift giving, but is not carried to extremes and few people visit for any length of time without supplying their own grub. Persistent demands for hospitality are, first covertly and then soon overtly, resented, since, particularly in the winter settlement, the supply of grub is limited and often barely enough to see a family through to spring.

Most gifts follow a call for assistance. Such requests may be outright, but are more generally advanced by implication. It is far more satisfactory if a person has his offhand statement of being low on raisins or moosehide fulfilled by a gift of such goods than if he has to request the objects directly. Although requests are commonly fulfilled, this is not necessarily done in a spirit of generosity and the realization of covert resentment operates to reduce calls for help. In return for his response, however, the donor enhances his reputation for generosity. Nevertheless this reputation dare not be too widely advertised, for fear that it will boomerang in the form of additional requests. Actually more people were described to the ethnographer as being stingy than were praised for their generosity. The reluctance of most people to make demands for goods or grub, particularly to non-relatives, also prevents a person's generosity from being abused. It is more or less understood that following assistance, the recipient will reciprocate the favor when he is called upon to do so. Actually many people chronically seek help without being able to contribute anything but cooperation in return, and this they are usually very unwilling to offer. The result is that the onus of giving rests upon a few older men who have been able to accumulate food and goods and who are generally extremely resentful of the role in which they are placed. Their antagonism reveals itself in ungenerous giving which in turn does not pass unnoticed and stimulates resentment in neighbors.

Loans differ from gifts in that they are made with the stronger expectation of the return of the object or its equivalent. Capital goods, as we have shown, are readily loaned. Grub, on the other hand, being more valuable, is more reluctantly shared in this fashion. Loans of money are occasionally made in summer with no interest being charged. It is not infrequent that loans fail to be repaid. Old Man reported lending skins to his son-in-law, Hans, who needed supplies but had no money. "I did it," Old Man said, "but he never let me have it [back]. If he stranger man, I bother him, but no use—he marry my daughter."

A final word may be added concerning the relatively rare incidence of the destruction of goods. This is limited to the worn clothes of the deceased, which are burned or abandoned after death, the rationalization being that they may carry disease and in this way threaten the surviving members of a family. A tent in which death has occurred is also sometimes abandoned for the same reason. Food of any kind is never destroyed.

Inheritance. Like most of the property transactions already referred to, the processes of

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

inheritance are poorly formalized. The amount of inheritable goods is small, the most valuable being the trap line, but no cases of real property inheritance were recorded. Indians spoke of their children or their sons-in-law receiving a trap line but in no case had anyone attempted to make provisions for such inheritance. Since men usually take up residence in the wife's country, it is reasonably likely that inheritance would fall to either a man's daughters or to his sons-in-law. Hans, Old Man's son-in-law, opined that if his father-in-law died, he would obtain ownership of the trap line which he was now using; after him the line would go to his brother-in-law, or preferably, to his brothers, who would then continue to support his wife. This, however, was largely wishful thinking. Old Man himself felt that his trap line should go to both his sons-in-law. His statement, however, was not intended as a testamentary disposition, and there is no evidence for believing he was much concerned with the matter. River Joe's attitudes regarding the marital residence of his children may be recalled as pointing to one individual's desire to insure the inheritance of his trap line by his children. Such an expectation contrasts with Old Man's readiness to have his property pass to sons-in-law and emphasizes the unformalized patterns of inheritance. It must be remembered, however, that Old Man has no sons and only a fifteen year old unmarried daughter. He also has two sons-in-law already trapping on his line, whereas three of River Joe's sons-in-law have set themselves up independently.[17]

Other goods left by a deceased are generally kept by the surviving spouse who may sell them or apportion them among her children according to sex, a woman's objects going to girls, and a man's to boys. Inherited property so disposed of includes mainly dogs, guns, traps, snowshoes, tools, jewelry, and clothing. A deceased child's possessions, including clothes, are divided among the siblings. No report was heard of disputes about inheritance.

Government

Lacking governmental institutions of their own, the Kaska Indians are subject to the Dominion Government and, depending on their location, to the local government of Yukon Territory or the Province of British Columbia. In the present section we are chiefly interested in the Indian's relationship to these governments. We will emphasize the individual's attitudes toward federal and local authority rather than discuss the functions of these authorities in any detail.

The Kaska Indians are, with a few exceptions, wards of the Dominion of Canada. The exceptions are the relatively few women who, having legally married white men, were enfranchised as citizens and the one or two young men who have had their names removed from the "Indian list," i.e., successfully petitioned for the status of citizenship. Such individuals often deny that they are Indians and emphasize their equal-to-white status.

In general, the people regard the abstraction, government, as a "boss" whose functions

[17] In a letter dated January 5, 1944, F. R. Butler, Game Commissioner of British Columbia states: "Should the holder of a trap-line die without making any provision with regard to the transfer of his line, then the line and his estate automatically come under the control of the Official Administrator for the district, and generally such official contacts this office and has the trapline transferred to a relative of the deceased holder, or he asks for permission to sell the trap-line and equipment thereon so that any money derived therefrom may be turned into the Estate." In Yukon Territory, where trap lines are not registered, transmission following death is probably handled by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, when called to their attention.

ceremonial way, even if he was very much older than she was. Anîeti or people who were of high rank through wealth always aimed to have their children marry among their own class. Sometimes lads or girls of this class followed their hearts and against their class interests married persons who were poor and of low rank. This, however, was exceptional, as it was not easy to go against the wishes of their parents and relatives, and, as it were, lose their cast. This is now almost all broken down as people are about equal to each other nowadays in wealth and the old aristocracy of wealth exists no longer. If a husband habitually ill-treated his wife her father could take her back by paying him for his loss. This was about equal to or a little over the value of the marriage presents received for his daughter and the gifts the husband after marriage had given to him.

Polygamy was practised, but very few men had more than one wife. A few had two. This practice had now died out. No woman had more than one husband.

If a man's wife died her unmarried sister was supposed to become his next wife. If for some reason he did not marry, his children if young were taken by his deceased wife's relatives to be reared by them.

As a nephew succeeded his uncle and inherited his property he also was expected to marry or at least support his uncle's widow.

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606 If a man's uncle had a young wife but he himself was old and had become too poor to support his wife properly, he might say to his nephew, "Henceforth you will look after and support my wife. She will be the same as your wife". The nephew then supported his uncle's wife and after her husband's death she became his wife in reality even although he had a wife already. Etiquette or custom required that a man and his mother-in-law should not speak to each other. The mother-in-law avoided her son-in-law as much as possible. She did not speak to him directly not even meet him if she could help it. If she met him on a trail, she turned her back so as not to see him until he passed. It is said the speaking to each other of mothers-in-law and sons-in-law was also tabooed among the Tlingit.

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777 The following were beliefs regarding marriage and procreation:

1. It was believed marrying generally changed a person's luck. A man who was unlucky or a poor hunter often became lucky or a good hunter after marriage. Also the reverse was sometimes the case. The change after marriage was due to the man's wife. A man might get a lucky woman or an unlucky one for his wife and this effected the man's luck for good or evil. Some men were not influenced this way after marriage.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

respect to beaver is partly explicable in terms of the animal's habit of remaining and reproducing within a relatively circumscribed district unless population pressure forces migration of the excess stock. Thus in most years Indians could depend upon being able to find food wherever beaver lodges were known to exist.

Of movable goods a man owned the bark and wood dishes, as well as the eating utensils which he made for his family, his own tools, caches (but not the food upon them), personal clothing, canoe, weapons, toboggan, personal snowshoes, and masks. A woman owned the bark- and spruce-root vessels that she manufactured, personal tools, the dwelling, food, prepared skins, personal clothing, all lines except those which she had given to her husband, and paints. Meat on a cache or freshly killed game cannot be considered the exclusive property of either the hunter or his family because the community felt and exercised a claim on such food. Failure to meet this expectation in the case of large game animals aroused resentment. In a sense children owned their toys as well as personal clothing and snowshoes. The mother controlled a child's possessions but they could not be disposed of outside the family, even by lending without the child's permission. By virtue of the control which parents claimed over a young person's nominal possessions they were able to use the latter freely. Although death might be followed by the destruction of some goods belonging to the deceased the custom did not have as its purpose transmission of wealth to the ghost. In the absence of grave goods people did not conceive of the ghost as owning anything. Even the burial clothes worn by the corpse "belonged to nobody."

Aside from one's name, ownership did not attach toward intangible goods. Nobody exercised individual control over songs or folk tales but it is likely that every man enjoyed some exclusive rights over the magical songs which he had dreamed on the vision quest.

Inheritance norms pertained to names and material goods alone.[24] Following death one half of a man's possessions went to his brother while the children divided the other half. Personal items were destroyed. A son usually acquired the scalps taken in battle. The widow might receive a share of the goods to which her brother-in-law enjoyed paramount rights, but her inclusion in inheritance does not appear to have been rigorously enforced. A man could marry his widowed sister-in-law or else could dispose of her to another husband but it is probably incorrect to list this pattern in a discussion of chattels. A woman's wealth fell to the widower, who customarily gave all or most of it to his brother's wife. The knife employed to sever the umbilical cord became the property of a woman's daughter.

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a lot of trouble between different tribes is started, also amongst the tribe itself." (Field, *Unpublished manuscript* [1913], 9.) Among the Tsapagotena (Beaver Indians of Fort Liard, perhaps the same group to which McLean refers), "when an Indian discovers one or more beaver lodges, if not already appropriated, he immediately puts his mark upon them, and no one dares to intrude upon his property without his permission, although I know of no punishment inflicted upon the guilty party unless it be the infamy attached to the action, which is considered as very mean and heinous." Keith, *Letters to Mr. Roderic McKenzie* (1890), 69.

[24] For the inheritance of names see below, p. 141.